

2. (Amended) The line coupling as claimed in claim 1, further comprising an evaluator evaluating a control word supplied via the input line, and in which the control circuit is designed to control the switch on the basis of an ascertained control word.

3. (Amended) The line coupling as claimed in claim 1, in which a voltage tap is provided on the input line, and in which the control circuit is designed to control the switch on the basis of an ascertained input voltage.

4. (Amended) The line coupling as claimed in claim 1, further comprising an evaluator evaluating a control word supplied via the output line, and in which the control circuit is designed to control the switch on the basis of the control word.

5. (Amended) The line coupling as claimed in claim 1, in which the control circuit is designed such that the controllable switch is turned on when the output voltage exceeds a limit value.

6. (Amended) The line coupling as claimed in claim 2, in which the control circuit is designed such that the controllable switch is turned on when the output voltage exceeds a limit value and a prescribed control word is detected.

7. (Amended) The line coupling as claimed in claim 3, in which the control circuit is designed such that the switch is turned on when the output voltage exceeds a limit value, a prescribed control word is detected and the input voltage exceeds a limit value.

8. (Amended) The line coupling as claimed in claim 4, in which the control circuit is designed such that the switch is turned on when the output voltage exceeds a limit value, a

11/5
prescribed control word is detected at the input or at the output and the input voltage exceeds a limit value.

Please cancel claim 9.

10. (Amended) The line coupling as claimed in claim 1, wherein the output line is the input line for another line coupling and the output line of the another line coupling is connected to a second slave station.

12
11. (New) The line coupling as claimed in claim 9, wherein additional line couplings are connected in series with one another, and a third slave station is arranged between two data coupling stations.

13
12. (New) The line coupling as claimed in claim 10, wherein the output line of a last line coupling is connected to the master station.

14
13. (New) The line coupling as claimed in claim 3, in which the control circuit is designed such that the controllable switch is turned on when the output voltage exceeds a limit value and a prescribed control word is detected.

15
14. (New) The line coupling as claimed in claim 4, in which the control circuit is designed such that the controllable switch is turned on when the output voltage exceeds a limit value and a prescribed control word is detected.

16
15. (New) The line coupling as claimed in claim 4, in which the control circuit is designed such that the switch is turned on when the output voltage exceeds a limit value, a prescribed control word is detected and the input voltage exceeds a further limit value.